

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY LONDON
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USCINCEUR
HQ 3AF RAF MILDENHALL

C O N F I D E N T I A L LONDON 08725

DEFENSE FOR OASD/ISA/FMA; OASD/PA; ASSISTANT SECRETARY
AF CHAYES; CSAF

E. O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: UK NATO MPOL MILI
SUBJECT: FAIRFORD ACTION COMMITTEE (FAC) MEETING WITH
MEETING WITH AMBASSADOR

REF: A) LONDON 8142; B) LONDON 8145

1. A DEPUTATION OF THE FAIRFORD ACTION COMMITTEE MET WITH THE AMBASSADOR ON 1 JUNE TO CONVEY OPPOSITION TO RAF FAIRFORD BEING CHOSEN AS THE ALTERNATIVE SITE TO GREENHAM COMMON (REFTELS). THE DEPUTATION WAS LED BY ANTHONY KERSHAW (CON., STROUD) ACCOMPANIED BY AIREY NEAVE (CON., ABINGDON) THE BISHOP OF GLOUCESTER, W. MCCLELLAND (CHAIRMAN OF GLOUCESTER COUNTY COUNCIL) AND DANIEL AWDRY (CONS., CHIPPENHAM). THE AMBASSADOR WAS ACCOMPANIED BY POL-MIL ATTACHE AND AIRA.

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2. THE DEPUTATION'S CASE WAS MADE MAINLY BY KERSHAW. THEIR ARGUMENTS WERE PRESENTED WITH RESTRAINT AND DIGNITY--AND THEY ARTICULATED THE CASE AGAINST TANKER DEPLOYMENT TO FAIRFORD BY USING ARGUMENTS WHICH ARE NOW WELL KNOWN. THERE WAS NO TOUCH OF ANTI-AMERICANISM NOR ANTI-MILITARISM. IN FACT, THE DEPUTATION STRESSED THEIR SUPPORT FOR NATO AND THE US

MILITARY PRESENCE IN THE UK. THEY MADE IT CLEAR, HOWEVER, THAT LOCAL OPPOSITION--WHICH ACCORDING TO THEM EMBRACED ABOUT 20,000 PEOPLE IN THE COTSWOLDS--WOULD NOT SIT STILL FOR A DECISION BY HMG WHICH SELECTED FAIRFORD.

3. A MAJOR ELEMENT OF THE FAC ARGUMENT IS THAT SINCE THE PEOPLE OF LINCOLNSHIRE "INVITE" THE SELECTION OF RAF WADDINGTON FOR THE TANKERS, FAIRFORD AND BRIZE NORTON SHOULD NOT BE SELECTED. ANOTHER ARGUMENT THEY ARE DEPLOYING IS THAT GOVERNMENT POLICY ON COMPENSATION (LAID DOWN IN THE WHITE PAPER "DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION--PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST") MAY NECESSITATE SUBSTANTIAL EXPENDITURE ON COMPENSATION FOR NOISE AND OTHER KINDS OF POLLUTION AND HENCE THE REAL COST OF SELECTING FAIRFORD WOULD BE SIGNIFICANTLY GREATER THAN . THE EXTRA COST OF BRINGNG THE FACILITIES AT RAF WADDINGTON TO A STANDARD ACCEPTABLE FOR TANKER USE.

4. THE FAC LATER DEMONSTRATED PEACEABLY OUTSIDE THE EMBASSY AND LEFT A LETTER FOR THE AMBASSADOR. THEY THEN WENT TO THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE TO PETITION WELLBELOVED, PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY FOR THE RAF. SINCE HE IS INDISPOSED, THE FAC DEPUTATION SAW NELSON, DUS/AIR.

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5. NELSON TOLD POL-MIL ATTACHE THAT MOD IS DETERMINED TO HOLD TO ITS COURSE VIS-A-VIS FAIRFORD. HE DEPRECATED FAC ARGUMENTS ABOUT WADDINGTON AND COMPENSATION COSTS, NOTING THAT RICHARD BODY'S (CON., HOLLAND AND BOSTON) URGING IN COMMONS THAT WADDINGTON BE SELECTED ON THE GROUNDS THAT BOTH THE LINCOLNSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL AND LINCOLNSHIRE MPS WANT THE TANKERS WILL NOT STAND UP AND IN ANY CASE A PROTEST DELEGATION FROM LINCOLNSHIRE IS SEEING MOD ON 5 JUNE; ON COMPENSATION NELSON SAID THE LAW IS FULL OF LOOPHOLES AND MOD DOUBTS THAT MORE THAN A HANDFUL OF CITIZENS WOULD WIN AN AWARD.

6. NELSON SAID HE HOPES MOD WILL HAVE A FINAL DECISION ON RAF FAIRTORD FOR US ON 5 JUNE. THEY WILL THEN START THE PROCESS OF INFORMING MPS, LOCAL AUTHORITIES, ETC. IN THE MEANWHILE, HMG WANTS TO KEEP CONFIDENTIAL THE FACT THAT FAIRFORD WILL ALMOST CERTAINLY RECEIVE MINISTERIAL ASSENT.

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